

# AetherStore Summary: College of Agriculture

## ENVIRONMENT

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The Systems Administrator, Matt, oversees a 300 PC environment for the College of Agriculture within the robust university network. Their infrastructure includes a storage server holding custom programs, downloads, installs and ghost images.



Industry: **Education**

Deployment: **200+ Windows PCs**

Storage Produced by AetherStore: **30TB**

## EXISTING CHALLENGES

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With the storage server full, Matt's team looked to increase capacity and ran into the following issues:

- **High cost: large capital outlay and long term commitment**
- **Complexity and resource drain: configuration and maintenance of new hardware**

SAN solutions were unrealistic due to budget restrictions. Matt's team also considered NAS products but ultimately sought to avoid purchasing new hardware in general, as it consumed additional physical space and required a significant time investment to set up and maintain.

## SOLUTION: AETHERSTORE DEPLOYMENT

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- **Phase One: 8 PCs**      ➔      **1.2TB raw storage**
- **Phase Two: 200+ PCs**      ➔      **30TB raw storage**

Matt's team first installed AetherStore on eight machines to open up 1.2TB of raw storage, effectively doubling previous capacity by utilizing only a fraction of their PCs. Image data from the department's storage server will be migrated to the AetherStore drive, freeing up capacity on the server and ensuring the images are stored in a reliable location for the long term.

The next stage of their AetherStore deployment will involve pooling space from over 200 PCs, opening up an estimated 30+TB of raw storage. In addition to storing image files, AetherStore will be used as backup for a number of the department's other files. With standard features including built-in redundancy, in-line deduplication and encryption, AetherStore's value eclipsed exponentially more expensive, hardware-based storage alternatives.

*"AetherStore has a unique product that serves up terabytes of space, in minutes, on hardware I already had."*

*-Matt, Systems Administrator*

# AetherStore Summary: Financial Services



## INFRASTRUCTURE

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Lauren is the Network Manager at a bank with a 50-employee environment. The network includes a 6TB SAN and a VMware vCenter infrastructure: 100% virtual, 18 servers.

Industry: **Banking**

Employees: **50**

Use Cases: **Backup, Utility Storage**

## STORAGE CHALLENGES

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- **Decrease current storage load on SAN:** "Currently, we download software installers to our network share. Since installers can be large, this takes up a large chunk of SAN space (approximately 21GB)." Lauren is looking to free up that space without having to resort to re-downloading software each time the installers are needed.
- **Provide desktop backup including desktop, documents and favorites:** "These items are not currently backed up since they sit on local drives of workstations." The bank needs a storage resource at which to point the desktop redirects.
- **Fast, flexible storage for project folders:** "At times projects are stood up, run, and then broken down without a need for maintaining data long-term." For these dynamic, often short-term storage requirements, Lauren needs storage available on-demand for different project groups without having to create new AD groups.

## AETHERSTORE SOLUTIONS

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In order to meet storage demands without consuming expensive SAN and server space, Lauren and her team will use AetherStore to produce additional storage resources from existing workstation hard drives.

"I feel like I am stating the obvious by saying that it uses un-tapped disk space. Organizations pay for the disks in their workstations, but most SMBs are going to discourage or block saving to that space. This opens up terabytes of data that would typically go unused."

Of setup, Lauren said AetherStore "takes minimal time or effort" and will produce a significant amount of storage to be used for:

- **Data store for IT installation files**
- **Endpoint for desktop folder redirection**
- **Dynamic storage for project teams**

*"My boss recently had a hard drive failure on a system that we don't stock hard drives for. I found myself at Staples to buy a drive and the smallest one I could get was 2TB. That is HALF the usable space of my SAN!"*

*--Lauren, Network Manager*

# AetherStore Summary: Wellston Technology



## USE CASE

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Wellston Technology will deploy AetherStore as a central part of their Backup and DR strategy at a client site with 350 machines, producing storage for redundant backup. Brant Wells, Owner & Lead Technologist, leads the AetherStore implementation.

Industry: **IT Services**

Number of Machines: **350**

Use Case: **Backup**

## EXISTING CHALLENGES

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“In the past, I have dealt with problems where the backup and storage was consistently requiring maintenance, and unreliable in general.” Often, important data was shipped offsite to remote locations, leaving Brant unsure what was actually backed up and how. His biggest pain points were:

- **Uncertainty and lack of visibility into status of backups**
- **Constant maintenance required for existing backups**

## AETHERSTORE: SETUP AND DEPLOYMENT

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*“Backup storage that just works is my primary goal for getting AetherStore into production.”*

*—Brant Wells, Owner & Lead Technologist, Wellston Technology*

Brant’s first AetherStore installation was a test environment across four nodes, creating a 30GB Store for smaller backup and CD/DVD images. They also have a small set of random software packages available on the Store. Going forward, Brant will expand the size of his Store across more of the 350 client machines to host a much larger backup, and add additional software packages to his Store.

- **Ease of management:** “I was able to install and manage my first Store within minutes after getting the installations done.”
- **Reliability of Storage:** “It is nice not to have to worry about losing a node or disk and having it ruin your night’s backups. With AetherStore, we are able to sleep at night knowing we have a good backup storage.”

“The setup process was simple: install the storage package on any number of nodes, and install the Dashboard on one of them. Mount the drive and share it via Windows. I love that I can also push and manage the installations with apps like PDQ Deploy. No muss, no fuss. It just worked!”

“With AetherStore, we are able to have a reliable storage location for our backups that makes it easy to house backup images and restore from backup when necessary. We don’t have to worry about whether or not the backup will belly-up if we lose a single (or more than one!) hard drive.

# AetherStore Summary: Weir Chevrolet

## INFRASTRUCTURE

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The Weir Chevrolet network supports a little over 100 users, 105 full desktops and 10 laptops. The network takes advantage of 3 virtual servers and is spread over 5 buildings. Richard Nihells is the IT Director for Weir's IT group, which supports help desk, system administration, security web development and some networking.



Industry: **Automotive**

Number of Employees: **100+**

Use Case: **Backup**

## STORAGE NEEDS

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- **Better utilization of secondary hard drives.**
- **Increased redundancy from current backup solutions**

## AETHERSTORE SOLUTION

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Richard's primary use case for AetherStore is storage backup, which was previously done using Windows Server Backup.

Using AetherStore will provide the additional redundancy and utilize the network's existing, secondary hard drives.

For Richard, AetherStore's greatest benefit was eliminating the need to purchase additional hardware by better leveraging existing assets: "Getting back unused storage space is the big thing. Now we don't need to buy extra hard drives and bays that we would have needed otherwise."

He currently has a 6-node Store deployed with plans to deploy AetherStore over around 20, mostly SSDs.

- **Phase One: 6 PCs**      ➔      **1.1TB raw storage**
- **Phase Two: 20 PCs**      ➔      **3.7TB raw storage (estimate)**

## AETHERSTORE SETUP

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*"Setting up the Store itself only took a few minutes after  
AetherStore Core was installed."*

*—Richard Nihells, IT Director, Weir Chevrolet*

Richard's recommendation for a quick AetherStore setup is ensuring proper firewall configuration before install, after which setup can be completed in just minutes.